UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1211
19 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(f))

THE REPORT OF THE WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

(Commission decision G (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This note has been prepared pursuant to operative paragraph 10 of Commission decision G (44): Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. In paragraph 8 of the decision the Commission reaffirmed the decision taken at its forty-third session (decision A (43)) to co-operate with the Government of Norway in the preparation of the regional conference at ministerial level to be held in Bergen (Norway) from 8 to 16 May 1990.

2. In preparation for the Conference the Government of Norway invited ECE member Governments to submit a national report on measures already taken, planned or proposed within the four selected themes of the Conference, i.e. the economics of sustainability; sustainable use of energy; sustainable industrial activity; and awareness raising and public participation. Reports have been received to date from 24 Governments. Within the framework of the ECE's co-operation with the Government of Norway, the secretariat prepared a synthesis paper based on the national reports which was a working document for the preparatory workshops. The Preparatory Committee has requested the secretariat to prepare an addendum to the synthesis prior to the Conference to reflect new materials submitted by member Governments since October 1989.

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3. A preparatory workshop was organized by the respective Governments on each of the four major themes, as follows:

- Workshop on Awareness Raising and Public Participation was held in London (United Kingdom) from 24 to 26 September 1989;

- Workshop on Sustainable Industrial Activity was held in Warsaw (Poland) from 22 to 24 November 1989;

- Workshop on Energy and the Environment - Sustainable Energy Use was held in Velen (Federal Republic of Germany) from 11 to 14 December 1989;

- Workshop on the Economics of Sustainability was held in Washington D.C. (United States) from 23 to 26 January 1990.

The reports of the workshops have been circulated to ECE member Governments by the host Governments.

4. The Preparatory Committee for the Conference held its first meeting in Bergen (Norway) from 6 to 8 September 1989 and its second meeting in Geneva from 5 to 9 March 1990. At its second meeting the Preparatory Committee approved a preliminary draft of a Ministerial Declaration and of a Joint Agenda for Action to be adopted by the Conference. The texts of these drafts have been circulated to all ECE Governments.

5. Pursuant to operative paragraphs 2 to 5 of decision G (44) on the WCED Report a Joint Task Force with Norway as lead country working under the auspices of both the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems and the Senior Economic Advisers to ECE Governments appraised the problems of and possibilities for the integration of environmental and macro-economic considerations. This assessment has served to build a common understanding and provided a starting point for drawing up guidelines which could serve as a framework in this important field, particularly wth respect to integrating environmental and economic concerns; environment and resource accounting; and combined environmental and economic projections.

6. An Ad hoc Meeting in January 1990 revised the report of the Joint Task Force on Environment and Economics and prepared a set of draft recommendations to ECE Governments in the field of environment and economics for consideration by the Commission (ENVWA/R.33 and ENVWA/AC.5/2).

7. In the light of operative paragraph 6 of decision G (44) the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems recommended that the Commission consider the possibility of setting up a joint Working Party under their auspices and those of the Senior Economic Advisers (ECE/ENVWA/14, para. 81), with a view to continuing co-operation between the two Senior Adviser bodies and to providing for the follow-up to the Bergen Conference. Attention would be given to relevant work carried out by other international organizations and advantage would be taken of the particular competence of the ECE regarding east-west co-operation (ECE/ENVWA/14, Annex V, programme element 05.1.2).

8. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of decision G (44) other Principal Subsidiary Bodies have reviewed their programmes of work in the light of the report of the Ad hoc Meeting to identify and evaluate ongoing activities contributing to sustainable development.

9. The Conference of European Statisticians at its thirty-seventh session tentatively selected "environmental accounting" and "systems of land use statistics" as topics for substantive discussion in 1991. It also decided to deal with agriculture and the environment in Part II of the 1991 Compendium of ECE Environment Statistics.

10. At its fiftieth session, the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning paid special attention to the Report of the WCED and identified the following programme elements in its programme of work dealing with sustainable development:

- Comprehensive policies for renewal and modernization of human settlements
- Planning for international tourism
- Promotion of international co-operation in the field of urban and regional research
- Effectiveness of settlement planning
- Housing forecasting and programming
- Evaluation of housing quality
- Distributional aspects of housing and taxation policies
- Energy conservation in buildings
- Building pathology and prevention of disorders.

11. The Committee on Agricultural Problems has aimed several of its activities at the better use of productive resources in order to ensure improved sustainable development of agricultural and food production. These include:

- Symposium on Improved Irrigation Practices to Preserve and Protect Water Resources and Increase Crop Yields
- Session of the ECE/FAO Working Party on Agrarian Structures and Farm Rationalization devoted mainly to legislation and measures to solve environmental problems resulting from agricultural practices, and their economic consequences
- Studies of the ECE/FAO Working Party on Mechanization of Agriculture on new technology to reduce the application of chemicals in agriculture, on soil conservation, and on future use of new and renewable sources of energy.

12. Among the activities of the Timber Committee particular attention is drawn to the series of long-term European Timber Trends and Prospects studies, of which the fifth is now in preparation, and the forest resource assessment (temperate-zone) 1990.

13. In the field of general energy a study has been undertaken of the interrelationships between environmental and energy policies along the lines agreed upon by a Preparatory Meeting held in May 1989. The draft was reviewed and approved by an ad hoc meeting held in January 1990, and the amended document (without addenda and chapter V) has been transmitted to the secretariats of the UNEP-WHO Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and of the Bergen Regional Conference.

14. At its eighty-fifth session the Coal Committee identified three topics related to the protection of the environment, namely:

- Inquiry among member States on "Coal industry or government sponsored studies of direct relevance to the coal combustion - CO_2 issue"

- Fluidized-bed combustion of low-calorific-value fuels

- Elaboration of a specification of minestone which may be used for civil engineering works.

15. At its thirty-sixth session the Committee on Gas identified four topics related to sustainable development dealing with:

- Developments in the gas industry to reduce repercussions on the environment of the use of natural gas

- Environmental problems associated with the exploration, production and processing of natural gas for pipeline transport

- Interrelationship between gas and climate change

- Methane emissions.

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UNITED
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Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1212
26 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(g))

THE COMMISSION'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN

(Commission decision H (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 5 of decision H (44).

2. In operative paragraph 2 of this decision the Commission welcomes progress made by the Conference of European Statisticians and its work on statistics and indicators on the role of women. Under the programme of work of the Conference, the Second ECE/INSTRAW Joint Meeting on Statistics of Women was held from 13 to 16 November 1989. The main topics considered were: improved measurement of women's labour force participation; the measurement of labour inputs in domestic/household, informal and related activities and valuation of their outputs; and statistics required for the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in countries of the ECE region (CES/AC.60/45). In terms of possible future work, the meeting recommended that the ECE produce a statistical publication containing statistics and indicators on the situation of women in the ECE region, and that the Conference convene a work session on statistics of women jointly with INSTRAW in 1991/92. These recommendations will be considered by the Conference at its forthcoming session.

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3. In response to paragraph 4 of decision H (44) the secretariat has continued its work, with the financial assistance of INSTRAW, on the project on time-use of women. In addition to an inventory of time-use studies and data sources in the ECE region, together with a computerized data bank, four studies have been prepared under the project on issues relating to the economic role of women in the ECE region compared with that of men. The study Everyday life in the ECE countries documents recent trends since 1920 in paid and unpaid work among men and women including time devoted to household work. The study Economic activity and women's time-use analyses the economic participation of women and the length of their participation in the labour force compared with men in a wide range of European countries from the 1960s to the 1980s. The study Variations in women's time-use by age and stage in family cycle describes how women in different ages and family cycle stages spend their time, focusing on the major activity categories of paid work, domestic work and the resulting total work-load. The study The informal and domestic work of women in countries with centrally planned economies analyses the determinants and forms of work, the time-use of men and women, and the economic role of women in the Eastern economies of the ECE region.

4. At the invitation of INSTRAW the secretariat participated in the Inter-agency Meeting on Evaluation Methodologies for Programmes and Projects of Women in Development which was held in New York from 8 to 10 November 1989.

5. At their meeting in Santiago (Chile) in April 1989 the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions discussed their respective activities on women's questions. They took note of the report on consultations between the regional commissions and INSTRAW held in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in February 1989 (INSTRAW/BT/1989/CRP.4) and agreed to establish parallel activities in co-operation with INSTRAW and other United Nations entities dealing with the subject, in particular with the Division for the Advancement of Women in the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA) while fostering the exchange of information among the commissions. At the session of the INSTRAW Governing Board held in Febuary 1990, of which the regional commissions are ex officio members, further consultations between the commissions and INSTRAW were held with a view to elaborating draft parallel activities. The Executive Secretaries will review the matter at their meeting in July 1990 to be held in Vienna (Austria) in co-operation with the Head of the CSDHA.

6. In general it was agreed that parallel activities between the commissions and INSTRAW should focus on the informal sector with emphasis on statistics and policy design. With this in mind the ECE secretariat will, in collaboration with INSTRAW and at no cost to ECE, convene an informal meeting of focal points on women's questions within the region in order to identify key issues relating to the economic role of women in the ECE region, including the informal sector.

7. In paragraph 7 of resolution 1989/105 - Co-ordination of activities of the United Nations system to advance the status of women and to integrate women in development - the Council "Urges all United Nations bodies, including the regional commissions, and the specialized agencies that have not yet done so to adopt and implement comprehensive policies for the advancement of women

on the basis of the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development, and to incorporate them in their organization's medium-term plans, statements of objectives, programmes and other major policy statements".

8. In paragraph 4 of resolution 1989/106 - Effective mobilization and integration of women in development - the Council "Further requests the Secretary-General to invite the regional commissions, within their terms of reference, to provide relevant input for the section of the World Economic Survey on the socio-economic attainment of women and for the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development".

UNITED
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E

Economic and Social
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GENERAL

E/ECE/1213
26 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(h))

CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND WATER RESOURCES

(Commission decision I (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of decision I (44), the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems, at their third session, completed the preparation of their terms of reference for approval by the Commission (ECE/ENVWA/14, Annex I).

2. On the basis of progress already achieved in elaborating a Convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context (paragraph 2 of decision I (44)) a Working Group will meet twice in 1990 to finalize the Convention for submission to the Senior Advisers at their fourth session (ECE/ENVWA/14, para. 26).

3. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of decision I (44) the Senior Advisers completed the preparation of the Code of Conduct on Accidental Pollution of Transboundary Inland Waters and recommended its adoption by the Commission (ECE/ENVWA/14, Annex II).

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4. The task force on responsibility and liability regarding transboundary water pollution, with Austria as lead country, made progress in its work (paragraph 4 of decision I (44)) and will finalize a report together with draft guidelines in 1991 (ECE/ENVWA/14, paragraph 36(c)).

5. Pursuant to paragraph 15 of decision I (44) the Executive Secretary attended the CSCE Meeting on the Protection of the Environment held in Sofia (Bulgaria) from 16 October to 3 November 1989 at the invitation of the CSCE Participating States and contributed a report.

6. Pursuant to operative paragraphs 5 and 7 of decision I (44), and in the light of the outcome of the CSCE Meeting on the Protection of the Environment, the Senior Advisers adopted the terms of reference for the elaboration of (a) a framework convention on the protection and use of transboundary water courses and international lakes (ECE/ENVWA/14, Annex IV) and (b) a legal instrument on transboundary impacts of industrial accidents (ECE/ENVWA/14, Annex III).

7. Following a recommendation by the Working Party on Low- and Non-waste Technology and Re-utilization and Recycling of Wastes the Senior Advisers decided to undertake the elaboration of a Regional Strategy on Integrated Waste Management with a view to establishing a concerted and systematic approach to harmonizing national waste-management policies (paragraph 8 of decision I (44)). This work will be carried out by a task force with Sweden as lead country (ECE/ENVWA/14, para. 44(e)).

8. In the light of paragraph 9 of decision I (44) the Senior Advisers convened an ad hoc meeting to finalize the European Red List of Threatened Animals and Plants together with draft recommendations to ECE Governments on its application for their consideration and subsequent adoption by the Commission in 1991. This meeting will be held in December 1990 in Antalya (Turkey) (ECE/ENVWA/14, para. 50).

9. Pursuant to operative paragraph 13 of decision I (44), the Senior Advisers will continue to pursue work on environment and economics in co-operation with the Senior Economic Advisers. Particular attention will be paid to the follow-up to relevant parts of the outcome of the Bergen Conference, taking into account the recommendations of the Ad hoc Meeting on Environment and Economics held in January 1990. For this purpose, the Senior Advisers recommended that the Commission consider the possibility of setting up a joint working party under the auspices of both Senior Advisers bodies (ECE/ENV/14, para. 81 and Annex V). The Senior Advisers also reviewed environmental activities carried out or planned by other Principal Subsidiary Bodies.

10. In paragraph 14 of decision I (44) the Commission emphasized the need to avoid overlapping and duplication of efforts in the field of international environmental co-operation, and, to this end, requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a synoptic survey of international environmental activities bearing on the whole of the ECE region in the various international fora with a view to facilitating co-ordination of efforts. The synoptic survey is being circulated in an addendum to this document.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1213/Add.1
27 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(h))

CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND WATER RESOURCES

(Commission decision I (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

ADDENDUM

SYNOPTIC SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES BEARING ON THE WHOLE OF THE ECE REGION IN VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL FORA

1. This addendum contains a synoptic survey of international environmental activities bearing on the whole of the ECE region in the various international fora */ prepared with a view to facilitating co-ordination of efforts pursuant to operative paragraph 14 of Commission decision I (44).

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*/ For the list of acronyms see page 9

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Assessment of the state of the environment

2. UNEP's Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS) Programme co-ordinates environmental data collection from United Nations organizations and other sources at the global, regional and national levels and makes relevant information accessible to the managers and planners of natural resources and the environment. These activities follow the sequence of monitoring, data management and environmental assessment. Monitoring will continue in the fields of renewable resources, climate, health, long-range transboundary pollution and oceans.

Scientific bases for environmentally sound and sustainable development

3. UNESCO launched a number of international scientific programmes focusing on specific types of natural resources or dealing with particular aspects of the environment: the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the UNESCO-UNEP International Environmental Education Programme (IEEP).

4. At the Second European Conference of MAB National Committees held in Trebon (Czechoslovakia) from 22 to 27 May 1989, topics were agreed upon for European co-operation within the MAB Programme including development and utilization of biosphere reserves for inventories, site characterization monitoring and research; comparative research on high mountain systems of Europe; forest ecosystem research to gauge the impact of various types of human intervention and to propose ecologically sound management guidelines; ecotones research; and research on the application of the concept of the ecologically sound city. A third conference is tentatively scheduled for September 1991 in Strasbourg (France). A conference will be held by UNESCO on hydrological research basins and the environment in Wageningen (Netherlands) from 24 to 28 September 1990.

5. As a follow-up to the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, a document was published on IAEA's Contribution to Sustainable Development, which gives an overview of environmental programmes within the Agency, including: work on risk management, environmental monitoring and impact assessment, resource development, nuclear techniques in studies of soil fertility, agro-chemicals and residues, and water resources.

Environment protection to improve human health

6. Ministers of the Environment and of Health of member States of the European Region of WHO, meeting at Frankfurt-am-Main (Federal Republic of Germany) in December 1989 as well as the Commission of the European Communities have adopted the "European Charter on Environment and Health" and have accordingly agreed upon the principles and strategies laid down therein as a firm commitment for action. The Annual Healthy Cities Symposium will be convened by WHO in Stockholm (Sweden) from 23 to 26 September 1990 to discuss matters regarding supportive environment.

Energy and environment

7. A symposium on electricity and the environment will be held in Helsinki (Finland) in May 1991 co-sponsored by ECE, FAO, UNEP, IAEA, IBRD, CEC, WMO, WHO, IIASA and OECD/IEA. The Symposium will examine data and focus on the comparative environmental and health impacts of different energy sources, their technical and economic potential to contribute to future energy supplies, the role of electricity in meeting future energy needs, and the means of incorporating environmental and health impacts into planning and decision-making.

Agriculture and environment

8. Under the auspices of FAO the sixteenth Regional Conference for Europe was held in 1988 on the integration of environmental aspects in agricultural, forestry and fishery policies in Europe. The seventeenth Regional Conference, convened in co-operation with ECE in Venice (Italy) from 3 to 7 April 1990, will, inter alia, focus on socio-economic aspects of environmental policies in European agriculture. A report will be published in 1990 on European agriculture: Policy issues and options to 2000.

9. A European Forest Ecosystem Research Meeting will be held in Göttingen (Federal Republic of Germany) from 25 to 29 July 1990 under the auspices of UNESCO.

Air pollution

10. The FAO European Forestry Commission has established an Ad hoc Working Group "Impact of air pollution on forests", which works in close contact with the "International Co-operative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests" established under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution.

11. IMO has taken up the problem of air pollutant emissions from ships in its Marine Environment Protection Committee.

12. ISO has established a Technical Committee on Air Quality, which elaborates standards for measuring ambient air quality and air pollutant emissions.

13. WHO/EURO has elaborated air quality guidelines for Europe, has prepared a series of reports on air quality guidelines for Mediterranean and East European countries, and will co-sponsor a workshop on air pollution measurements and monitoring systems (Budapest, Hungary, 18-20 April 1990) with the European Association for the Science of Air Pollution (EURASAP).

14. WMO continues its co-operation with ECE on the Co-operative programme for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP), under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. WMO held an expert meeting to review the results of the fourth phase of EMEP (1987-1989) and discussed the work programme for 1990-1992, which includes the long-range transport and deposition of nitrogen compounds and ozone. In July 1989 a two-year project was started together with IAEA and CEC to evaluate

atmospheric transport models for radio-nuclides (ATMES). A proposal is being studied to extend this project and carry out a large scale dispersion experiment on the European continent in order to further test atmospheric transport models and to evaluate the skills of meteorological services to convey warnings when toxic or radioactive matter is released in the atmosphere.

Hydrology and water resources

15. The overall objective of the WMO Hydrology and Water Resources Programme (HWRP) for the decade 1988-1997 is to ensure the assessment and forecasting of the quantity and quality of water resources both for different sectoral uses and for hazard mitigation. At the regional level, the implementation of the HWRP is carried out by the WMO Regional Associations' Working Groups on Hydrology. The work programme of the Working Group on Europe includes studies on hydrological networks for both ground water and surface water as well as for basins with disturbed regimes; and hydrological observational requirements in small basins.

16. UNEP and IAHS are jointly convening a Conference on Groundwater Protection in Bilthoven (Netherlands) from 23 to 27 April 1990.

17. The main purpose of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO is to develop a scientific and technological basis for the rational management of water resources, as regards both quantity and quality. Groups of European IHP National Committees have established sub-regional programmes under the umbrella of the IHP: the Nordic countries, countries of the Danube and Rhine basins respectively; and countries around the Baltic Sea. European countries have hosted a large number of international IHP symposia and workshops as well as UNESCO-sponsored post-graduate hydrology courses.

18. Under the aegis of the Regional Association on Europe, WMO convened the Conference on Climate and Water in Helsinki (Finland) from 11 to 15 September 1989 co-sponsored by UNEP, UNESCO, IAHS and IIASA. The discussion focused on the following issues: understanding the climate system - its variability and potential for change; climate and hydrological cycle; impacts of climate variability and change; and policy options. Studies are being undertaken by the Regional Association on Europe regarding, inter alia, models for evaluating the effects of climate changes on water resources; climate changes and climatic variability using hydrological data.

Water resources monitoring and assessment

19. As a result of relevant activities of the WMO Commission for Hydrology two manuals have been published: "Water quality monitoring - planning and implementation of sampling and field testing" and "Operational methods for the measurement of sediment transport". A WMO Operational Hydrology Report was also published on the planning and implementation of a ground water observation programme.

20. WHO is intending to initiate with the financial support of UNDP a project for joint inter-country water quality monitoring, policy making and pollution control of the River Danube.

21. WMO and UNESCO are jointly involved in the assessment of both surface water and ground-water resources with respect to their quantity and quality. A handbook for the national evaluation of water resource assessment activities has been jointly published.

22. ISO Technical Committee 147 is elaborating standards in the field of water quality sampling and analysis. They cover the spectrum of physical, chemical, biological and microbiological analyses for water quality parameters and sludge/sediment constituents. Some 30 standard methods are now available.

23. A long-term project is being pursued by UNESCO - the International Hydrogeological Map in Europe - making possible an assessment of ground-water resources in Europe and a delineation of vulnerability zones. Some twenty sheets (out of thirty) have been published to date.

Marine pollution

24. IMO is scheduled to consider and adopt the International Convention on Pollution Preparedness and Response at a diplomatic conference in November 1990. The establishment of an international oil pollution information centre within, or under the auspices of IMO, is also under consideration. IMO will also begin in 1991 consideration of extending the above-mentioned Convention's application to hazardous and noxious substances other than oil.

25. IMO will continue its policy of establishing regional anti-pollution training and equipment centres in sea areas where the density of maritime traffic and the vulnerability of the areas to pollution would justify such measures.

26. FAO in the context of the Group of Experts on Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution (GESAMP) is leading the work on scientifically-based strategies for marine environment protection and management. A report "Environmental capacity: an approach to marine pollution prevention" was published in 1986.

27. The activities of UNESCO - IOC during 1990/92 will generate, inter alia, information on distribution of contaminants in coastal waters and their biological effects and regional distribution of contaminants.

28. IUCN will convene an International Conference on Large Marine Ecosystems in Monaco from 1 to 10 October 1990.

Accidental pollution

29. Through a Standing Committee on Nuclear Liability, IAEA is working to improve the international liability régime in case of nuclear accidents. Pursuant to the 1986 Conventions on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency a two-year project was started in July 1989 together with CEC and WMO to evaluate atmospheric transport models for radionuclides.

30. The WMO Commission for Hydrology is undertaking the preparation of a manual providing guidance on minimizing the impact of accidental pollution of

water bodies and the evaluation of models relating to the transport and dispersion of hazardous material in soils and inland water bodies. Both activities are being carried out in co-operation with IAEA.

Emergency at the local level

31. UNEP launched its programme on industrial accidents called "Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level" (APELL) and produced a handbook on Technological Accidents intended to complement existing national emergency planning procedures.

32. In 1988 ILO published a manual on major hazard control to deal with the safety aspects of siting, planning, design, construction and operation of plants. Owing to the potential adverse effects of major accidents on both workers and the community, information is provided on planning for emergencies, both on site and in the surrounding neighbourhood.

33. ILO is now preparing a code of practice on the prevention of major accident hazards. Priority is being given to developing well-managed occupational safety and health programmes at the workplace as this also provides an important contribution to the protection of the general environment, including human health and the improvement of the quality of life. Consideration is also being given by ILO to the possible development of new international labour standards concerning the prevention of major hazards as suggested by the 1985 ILO Conference resolution concerning the promotion of measures against risks and accidents arising from the use of dangerous substances and processes in industry.

34. IAEA is establishing standards of safety for nuclear power plants and other fuel cycle operations, including the management of radioactive waste. Upon request, IAEA sends advisory missions such as Operational Safety and Review Teams, Radiation Protection Advisory Teams and Assessment of Safety Significant Events Teams. It operates an Incident Reporting System in co-ordination with the Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD/NEA).

Control of toxic chemicals

35. UNEP updates several registers or lists on the toxic status of these substances: (a) the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC); (b) a list of Selected Environmentally Harmful Chemical Substances, Processes and Phenomena of Global Importance; (c) Legal Data Profile for Selected Chemicals covering regulatory information from countries and intergovernmental organizations on more than 500 chemicals; (d) a Chemical Safety Directory covering, inter alia, institutions involved in the testing of chemicals, enforcement of chemical control legislation, toxic chemical management and emergency response operations; and (e) in co-operation with other United Nations organizations, as well as CEC, CMEA and OECD, a list of products whose consumption has been banned, withdrawn or severely restricted. It has also established an International Registry of Chemicals Currently being Tested for Toxic Effects (CCTTE). IRPTC has been providing countries with detailed data on the production, distribution, release and disposal of chemicals. The Register has built up information on national and international regulations for more than 6000 chemicals, as well as detailed

profiles of more than 550 chemicals, and data on environmentally sound disposal methods for about 500 chemicals. In co-operation with IPRTC, FAO has also prepared a Code of Conduct on Distribution and Use of Pesticides.

36. UNEP, ILO and WHO collaborate in the International Programme for Chemical Safety (IPCS) in order to evaluate effects of chemicals on human health and the environment, to develop guidelines for exposure limits and to pin-point gaps in knowledge relating to potential hazards from chemicals and wastes. IPCS in co-operation with CEC, CMEA and OECD, is also elaborating methodologies for toxicity testing.

37. At the fifteenth UNEP Governing Council in 1989 amendments on prior informed consent to the London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade were adopted.

Low- and non-waste technology

38. UNEP's Office on Industry and Environment publishes an information transfer series for the dissemination of technical information. It offers users information on control technologies and low- and non-waste technology which is at present well-developed, applied in practice and cost-effective. The first issue in the series was "Pollution Abatement and Control Technology (PACT) for the Pulp and Paper Industry", followed by an open-ended publication with examples of low- and non-waste technology. It is primarily intended for the use of developing countries, like other data banks on environmental technology created by various specialized agencies such as the ILO, FAO and UNIDO.

Waste management

39. The WHO Regional Office for Europe has implemented activities related to health impacts from, inter alia, emissions of dioxin, furan, PAH and heavy metal compounds from municipal waste incineration as well as from chemicals in hazardous waste from hospitals and other health care facilities. Policy Guidelines and a Code of Practice on Management of Hazardous Wastes were published in 1983. A study was initiated in 1987 on the development of criteria for the selection of sites for hazardous-waste treatment and disposal. A workshop on waste recycling in healthy cities will be held in Padua (Italy) from 21 to 25 January 1991. Programme delivery is likely to emphasize public information systems and a strengthened advisory service, in co-operation with expert agencies, to countries in greatest need of improved waste disposal capabilities.

40. The UNEP Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal was signed in Basel (Switzerland) on 22 March 1989. An Interim Secretariat for the Convention has been established in Geneva. UNEP has elaborated guidelines for the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes. UNEP is also preparing a comprehensive report on illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products and wastes, including traffic not carried out in compliance with internationally accepted guidelines and principles. UNEP, WHO and IBRD have completed a manual on safe disposal of hazardous wastes.

41. IAEA has developed a draft Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Transfer of Radioactive Waste which will be considered by the General Conference in September 1990.

Flora, fauna and their habitats

42. In 1985 UNESCO, together with UNEP, FAO and IUCN, adopted the Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves. As of mid 1989 there were 276 biosphere reserves located in 71 countries of which 152 were located in the European region.

43. IUCN has carried out, inter alia, a survey of acid deposition on protected areas in eastern Europe. An international meeting on management of protected areas under immission impacts is scheduled to be held in Czechoslovakia in June 1990.

Environmental education and awareness raising

44. UNESCO is promoting environmental education, information and public awareness programmes: an International Congress held in Moscow in 1987 adopted an International Strategy for Action in the field of Environmental Education and Training for the 1990s; in 1989 several symposia and seminars were held addressing, inter alia, the following issues: contents and methods of environmental education for professional groups; economists, planners, etc. (Valetta, Malta); promotion of international co-operation and peace through environmental education (Norway); use of findings of environmental research in environmental education (Valetta, Malta); and integration of environmental education into general university teaching in Europe (Brussels, Belgium).

45. The ILO is preparing an environmental training strategy and is promoting the implementation of environmental training programmes directed at employers' and workers' organizations.

46. WMO and UNEP are organizing a Training Course on Background Air Pollution Measurements in Budapest (Hungary) from 2 to 3 November 1990.

* * *

ORGANIZATION ACRONYMS

CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAHS	International Association of Hydrological Sciences
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IEA	International Energy Agency
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNDRO	United Nations Disaster Relief Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WHO/EURO	World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1214
16 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(i))

AIR POLLUTION

(Commission decision J (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. As requested by paragraph 12 of decision J (44), the present report summarizes the activities of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution in implementing the Convention during the period since the forty-fourth session of the Commission.

2. Of the 32 Parties to the Convention, 31 have become Parties to the 1984 Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Co-operative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (in force since 28 January 1988), and 20 have become Parties to the 1985 Protocol on the Reduction of Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30%. The 1988 Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes has been signed by 27 Parties and ratified by 10.

3. At the seventh session of the Executive Body in November 1989, the Parties reached a common understanding about the interpretation of the basic provisions (article 2) of the Protocol on the Reduction of Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30%, as follows:

GE.90-20919/5644a

"The obligation for the Parties to reduce their national annual sulphur emissions or their transboundary fluxes by at least 30% as soon as possible and at the latest by 1993, using 1980 levels as the basis for calculation of reductions, means that reductions to that extent should be reached in that time frame and the levels maintained or further reduced after being reached." (ECE/EB.AIR/20 paragraph 22)

4. Furthermore, the Executive Body amended the terms of reference of the Working Group on Abatement Strategies, requesting in particular that "the Group will report to the eighth session of the Executive Body with appropriate proposals and a timetable for revision of existing, or preparation of new, international agreements for further reduction of sulphur emissions after 1993, on the basis of critical loads and other considerations." (ECE/EB.AIR/20, para. 20, and Annex I). The Working Group will submit an interim report on progress towards agreement on critical loads to the Executive Body in November 1990. Mapping of critical levels and loads in the ECE region has started in accordance with the draft manual prepared by a task force which will hold its second meeting at Bad Harzburg (Federal Republic of Germany) in May 1990.

5. The Working Group on Volatile Organic Compounds, at its third session in January-February 1990, made good progress towards the preparation of a new protocol on volatile organic compounds (EB.AIR/WG.4/6). Its fourth session will be held from 16 to 20 July 1990.

6. The Co-operative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) successfully completed its fourth phase in 1989, and initiated the fifth phase (1990-1992) in accordance with the agreed work plan, including gradual extension of the measurement programme. Pursuant to a memorandum of understanding concluded between the Executive Secretaries of ECE and of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), the international EMEP centres will co-operate with HELCOM with respect to air pollution data for the Baltic Sea area; similar arrangements for the North Sea area are in preparation with the Oslo/Paris Commission (OSPARCOM).

7. The four international co-operative programmes for assessment and monitoring of air pollution effects (on forests, agricultural crops, freshwaters, materials and monuments) and the pilot programme on integrated monitoring also progressed on schedule. Results have been published, together with the annual review of strategies and policies for air pollution abatement, in the ECE "Air Pollution Studies" series No. 5 (E.89.II.E.25). The Executive Body, at its eighth session in November 1990, will take up the question of long-term financing for these programmes.

8. In the field of technologies for emission control, the new Task Force on Exchange of Technology established by the Executive Body held its second meeting in Helsinki (Finland) in March 1990, with a focus on financial aspects of technology exchange. The Fifth Seminar on Emission Control Technology for Stationary Sources will be held in Nuremberg (Federal Republic of Germany) from 10 to 14 June 1991.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1215
14 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(j))

EVOLUTION IN THE DIMENSIONS OF LOADING UNITS

(Commission decision K (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 3 of decision K (44).

2. In accordance with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee at its fiftieth session endorsed by the Commission at its forty-fourth session (paragraph 1 of decision K (44)), a seminar on the Impact of Increasing Dimensions of Loading Units on Combined Transport was held from 13 to 16 November 1989 (TRANS/SEM.7/4).

3. The Seminar was attended by more than 100 experts representing most ECE member countries, Japan and a number of developing countries. Delegations from more than 20 international organizations representing a wide range of transport and shippers' interests also attended the Seminar.

4. The Seminar discussed governmental policy measures, analysed the demand for and the likely trends with regard to combined transport, and identified possible requirements and constraints, taking into account the large investments already made in equipment and infrastructures in respect of the traditional transport modes (road, rail, inland water, sea). The final objective of the Seminar was to consider a long-term strategy on maximum

dimensions of loading units in combined transport acceptable to all parties concerned, and in line with existing and planned national inland regulations and infrastructure requirements. Such a long-term strategy should give standardization organizations, transport operators and investors in combined transport equipment the information they need for rational planning and decision making in this field.

5. In view of the widely different views expressed at the Seminar on the requirements of loading units, such as containers and swap-bodies on the one hand and on the limitations of the present and future transport infrastructure in most countries represented at the Seminar on the other, a common position on the future dimensions of loading units could not be agreed upon. However, the Seminar agreed that comprehensive cost-benefit analyses, including also the indirect social and environmental consequences of the introduction of new dimensions of loading units, covering all modes of transport, equipment and related infrastructures, should be carried out before a decision on new global standard dimensions of loading units in combined transport was taken.

6. Subsequently, the Inland Transport Committee, at its fifty-second session, having expressed its satisfaction at the successful outcome of this Seminar, thanked the UNCTAD secretariat for its assistance in inviting UNCTAD member countries to participate and approved the report of the Seminar including its recommendations. Furthermore it adopted Resolution No. 237 with a view to initiating immediate action at the global level in order to arrive at concrete solutions in this area in due course (see annex 3 to the report of the Committee, ECE/TRANS/81).

7. By paragraph 4 of this Resolution the Executive Secretary is requested to bring the Resolution to the attention of the Economic and Social Council in order to inform all countries members of the United Nations of the work carried out by the ECE in this field.

8. Furthermore Resolution No. 237 requests:

(a) ECE member Governments to take appropriate initiatives for the execution of cost-benefit studies referred to under paragraph 3 of the Resolution within and outside the United Nations sytem;

(b) the Executive Secretary to submit a progress report on the execution of the studies referred to above, if possible at the fifty-third session of the Inland Transport Committee in 1991, in order to allow the Inland Transport Committee to ensure the monitoring of these studies and their co-ordination;

(c) the Executive Secretary to convene in 1992 a Seminar to consider the results of the studies referred to above.

The Inland Transport Committee will then take a final decision on dimensions of loading units in combined transport if possible at its fifty-fifth session in 1993.

* * *

9. In the light of the above, the Commission may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

The Economic Commission for Europe,

Confirming the important role of combined transport for an efficient and socially acceptable functioning of the total transport chain,

Conscious that port-to-port container transport will be replaced increasingly by door-to-door transport systems which will lead to a growing importance of port hinterland and inland container transport,

Aware that the world-wide standardization of dimensions of all loading units in combined transport would enhance its productivity and reduce the transport of empty units,

Recognizing that the existing ISO container standards do not constitue ideal solutions as regards their inner and outer dimensions,

Recognizing also that new dimensional standards for inland and maritime loading units could only be introduced and would be acceptable world-wide, if all parties concerned (shippers, transport and terminal operators, Governments, etc.) would be involved in its preparation,

Convinced that world-wide acceptance would be facilitated if such standards would be in line with present and future national road traffic legislation and inland infrastructure requirements,

Emphasizing the need for a long-term strategy on maximum dimensions of loading units in combined transport to provide standardization organizations, transport and terminal operators as well as investors in combined transport equipment and infrastructure with the information they need for rational planning and decision making in this field,

1. Takes note of the Executive Secretary's report E/ECE/1215;

2. Approves the report of the ECE Seminar on the Impact of Increasing Dimensions of Loading Units on Combined Transport (13 to 16 November 1989) (TRANS/SEM.7/4);

3. Fully endorses Resolution No. 237 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee at its fifty-second session;

4. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council to invite other Regional Commissions and appropriate United Nations bodies to co-operate with the ECE in this field and to undertake, as soon as possible, studies, including economic, social and environmental impact analyses on the consequences of increasing dimensions of loading units on combined transport;

5. Further recommends to the Economic and Social Council to invite other Regional Commissions and appropriate United Nations bodies to transmit the above studies for consideration to a Seminar to be convened by the ECE in 1992;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its forty-sixth session on the implementation of this decision.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1216
14 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(k))

EDIFACT

(Commission decision L (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. The present report has been prepared in response to paragraph 6 of decision L (44).

2. In operative paragraph 2 of decision L (44) the Commission "Recommends to the Executive Secretary that, in examining closely the resources required for the maintenance and development activity now underway, consideration be given to the issue of what resources, from within existing ECE resources, might be made available to support this activity". Pursuant to a request by the Committee on the Development of Trade at its thirty-eighth session, in December 1989, a description of the permanent staff resources required to develop and maintain UN/EDIFACT was prepared by the secretariat (TRADE/WP.4/R.659) and discussed by the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, so that the Commission could examine the implications of these requirements.

3. Under the terms of decision L (44) the Commission also reaffirmed the importance for all countries to be in a position to derive full benefit from electronic data interchange using UN/EDIFACT and recognized the benefits for

GE.90- 20899 /5636a

world trade to be drawn from the universal application of EDIFACT. Accordingly it suggested in principle co-operative activities at the regional and interregional levels for its promotion, and recommended to ECOSOC that it consider a project for interregional co-operation in this field. The Commission invited the other regional commissions to co-operate with ECE and UNCTAD to that end. In this connection the ECE secretariat participated in a Meeting of National Trade Facilitation Bodies of the ESCAP region organized by ESCAP and UNCTAD in Manila (Philippines) (29 January to 2 February 1990).

4. At its second regular session in July 1989 the Council, in considering decision L (44), adopted resolution 1989/118 on interregional co-operation for facilitation of international trade. By operative paragraph 1 of this resolution it invited:

> "the regional commissions to formulate, jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, within existing resources, a draft proposal for interregional co-operation based on projects detailing technical and resource requirements, duly taking into account the national laws and regulations and the needs and concerns of the various regions, especially those of the developing countries, in the area of trade facilitation, and to submit the draft proposal for approval to the Council at its second regular session of 1990."

5. The secretariats of the regional commissions jointly with UNCTAD have elaborated the draft proposal called for, which incorporates the objectives, outputs and activities for interregional co-operation to promote UN/EDIFACT. The proposal comprises four parts: training; networks of the trade facilitation activities; UN/EDIFACT promotion and implementation; regional participation in global facilitation work. Consultations on the draft proposal are continuing. The present version of the draft proposal is contained in Annex I. The final version will include a description of resource requirements.

6. After consideration by ECOSOC at its Second Regular Session 1990, the proposal will be elaborated into a Project Document, which will then be submitted jointly by the regional commissions and UNCTAD to UNDP, other funding organizations and prospective donors.

* * *

7. In the light of the above, the Commission may wish:

(a) to take note of the Executive Secretary's report E/ECE/1216;

(b) to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that it endorses the draft proposal on interregional co-operation for facilitation of international trade;

(c) to request the Executive Secretary to report to the forty-sixth session of the Commission on the implementation of this decision.

ANNEX

INTERREGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

DRAFT PROPOSAL

[Prepared by the five regional commissions jointly with UNCTAD]

I. Legal Context

. . .

II. The Project

A. Context

One truth that has been reiterated for virtually all countries developed and developing during the 1980s is that foreign trade is vital to their continued well-being. However, simply the desire to trade with other countries is not sufficient to ensure that such transactions will take place. Most products are supplied by more than one country, which must compete with each other for markets. Therefore, nations wishing to promote the growth of their foreign trade must make every effort to ensure that their products remain competitive.

Although many activities designed to improve competitiveness are themselves competitive in nature, there is one in which government, industry and individuals can combine their efforts to the benefit of all concerned. This activity, known as facilitation, consists of the simplification, minimization and, where possible, standardization of those governmental and institutional procedures, formalities and requirements which not only place financial and economic burdens on the free flow of goods and transport but may actually prevent commerce from taking place. Ultimately, the goal is to rationalize the management of physical distribution system that often cut across national boundaries and practices. To accomplish this goal, national, regional and even global efforts must be made to permit or expedite the logistics of trade and transport.

The original focus of facilitation activities was largely on the documents in which procedures, formalities and requirements have traditionally been manifested. In recent years, however, there has been an increasing tendency for paper documents to be replaced in trade among developed countries by electronic messages exchanged by trading partners on a computer-to-computer basis. This electronic data interchange (EDI) greatly speeds up the transmission of information required by both private industry and public agencies regarding trade and transport operations, thereby reducing costs and simplifying the communications process. EDI thus constitutes an important form of facilitation that the developing countries should take greater advantage of in order to increase the competitiveness of their products.

B. Project Justification

Although facilitation has been successfully institutionalized for many years in the developed countries, few in the developing world have made adequate progress in applying this concept to the elimination of procedural impediments to trade and transport such as excessive paperwork, complicated administrative requirements, lack of common working hours at border crossings, and the like. Conscious of the global importance of facilitation for improving the international trade of these countries, the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its Resolution 1989/118 called for the regional commissions, jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), to formulate a project of interregional co-operation in this area that will promote the reduction, simplification and harmonization of formalities, procedures and documentation.

The project will have four components:

(i) training;
(ii) establishing networks of facilitation activities;
(iii) promoting and implementing the United Nations Rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT);
(iv) fostering regional participation in global facilitation work.

Each component will comprise certain activities of a global nature, as well as regional activities dealing with aspects that are unique to each of the developing areas falling under the responsibility of one of the regional commissions.

Neither the regional commissions nor UNCTAD can provide from their regular budgets the resources required to achieve the objectives of the project. It is thus necessary to seek external funding for resources adequate to permit a quantum increase in the level of activities that the developing countries dedicate to the facilitation of trade and transport logistics.

International leadership in facilitation activities has traditionally been exercised by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in association with UNCTAD's Trade Facilitation Programme (FALPRO). Following this same scheme, the global activities of the project will be executed by the ECE with the collaboration of UNCTAD/FALPRO, as appropriate. Each of the four regional commissions for developing areas will execute its own regional activities, under the general co-ordination and, as appropriate, with the participation of the ECE. Great care will be taken to harmonize all these activities with other projects being carried out by the UNDP, the World Bank and other international agencies that provide technical assistance.

C. Development Objectives

The project has two development objectives. One is to foster improvements in general facilitation techniques employed by individual countries for the simplification, minimization and, where possible, standardization of procedures, formalities and requirements associated with

the logistics of international trade and transport. This is the principal focus of regional activities, which must be carried out in a somewhat different manner depending on the specific characteristics and requirements of the various developing areas. UNCTAD is also involved in achieving this objective through its support of focal-point staff from the regional commissions in developing regions.

The other development objective is to globalize the application of electronic data interchange, especially as it is manifested in UN/EDIFACT. Accomplishment of this objective will be carried out by the ECE jointly with the other regional commissions and with UNCTAD. Furthermore, all regional activities seek to promote the EDI concept and the use of EDIFACT standards in the facilitation of trade and transport logistics in the individual countries.

The ultimate objective of the project is to use facilitation as a means of improving the market position of exports from the developing countries. By simplifying, minimizing and, where possible, standardizing those governmental and institutional procedures, formalities and requirements that constitute obstacles to the international free flow of goods, a reduction in the cost of these goods will be achieved, thereby making them more competitive in world markets.

D. Immediate Objectives, Outputs and Activities

COMPONENT I - TRAINING

OBJECTIVE 1 - PROVIDE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS WITH EDUCATIONAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATERIALS ON FACILITATION.

Outputs

(i) Visual education materials in the form of video cassettes, in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The video sequences will also be available without sound, so that other languages can be dubbed in as required.

(ii) A manual, in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish, describing how national facilitation committees can be organized.

(iii) A manual, in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish, describing what steps national facilitation committees can take to accomplish specific goals in order to permit or expedite the logistics of international trade and transport.

Global activities

Experts from the ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO will collaborate in preparing these materials and the other regional commissions will be consulted, more particularly on outputs (ii) and (iii). Most video sequences should be obtainable from film-clip libraries, which will substantially reduce production costs.

Regional activities

The trade facilitation focal points will collaborate with ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO in the dissemination of prepared materials to parties concerned in the region.

OBJECTIVE 2 - DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN FACILITATION CAPABILITIES OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS.

Outputs

Training in facilitation of focal-point staff of the regional commissions in developing areas.

Global activities

Experts from UNCTAD/FALPRO and the ECE will give initial training to focal-point staff and provide them with continuing support. The presence of this staff will afford the commissions an opportunity to build up their own expertise in facilitation.

Regional activities

Travel to Geneva by focal-point personnel and commission staff involved in trade facilitation work for training and orientation.

Travel from Geneva by ECE focal point to assist focal point personnel from other commissions, as required.

OBJECTIVE 3 - IMPROVE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN FACILITATION.

Outputs

Roving workshops on facilitation.

General regional activities

The regional commissions will organize workshops in the individual countries of their areas, which will be presented by regional focal-point staff in collaboration with experts from the ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO and from national facilitation committees in other countries (principally in Europe) that have achieved an outstanding degree of success in this field, in order to:

- train national personnel and representatives of subregional and regional organizations in identifying and defining the scope of facilitation requirements and constraints;

- provide them with specific skills in the methods and techniques of facilitation;

- enhance their knowledge of global-level facilitation work being carried out by the ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO;

- prepare them to make substantive contributions to the ECE's Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4).

Specific regional activities

ESCAP: On the completion of the ongoing ESCAP Project on Trade Facilitation and of the UNDP financed UNCTAD executed ASEAN Trade Facilitation Project, workshops on trade facilitation at the national level would have already been organized in several ESCAP countries. Such workshops will be organized in the countries not already covered and will be repeated as required in the other countries.

ESCWA: Organize, in co-operation with the ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO, one regional seminar of one-week duration on trade facilitation methods and techniques, with a maximum of 25 participants including national representatives of both the public and private sectors (departments concerned with commerce, transport, Customs administration, statistics and data processing; chambers of commerce and industry and associations of producers, exporters, carriers, forwarders, etc.) and representatives of regional and subregional organizations (e.g., the Council of Arab Economic Unity, Gulf Co-operation Council, Arab Co-operation Council, Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture).

COMPONENT II - NETWORKS OF FACILITATION ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE 4 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - ESTABLISH OR STRENGTHEN THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF NATIONAL, SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL FACILITATION BODIES, AND ASSIST THEM IN CARRYING OUT THEIR ACTIVITIES.

Outputs

(i) Reports on existing national, subregional and regional facilitation mechanisms, together with requirements for institution building.

(ii) National seminars dealing with problems encountered in the facilitation process.

General regional activities

(i) Analyse the current situation in each country, and in subregional and regional organizations, as appropriate, with respect to institutional framework and capacity to undertake trade facilitation programmes.

(ii) Organize and present seminars at national, subregional or regional levels to support the establishment or strengthening of national, subregional and regional facilitation bodies.

Specific regional activities

ECA:

- Establishment of a regional focal point within the Trade and Development Finance Division with two regional advisers who will co-ordinate all facilitation activities and carry out technical assistance missions to countries and subregional organizations. Countries and subregional groupings will be assisted for the establishment and/or strengthening of facilitation focal points which will act as counterparts of ECA's Regional focal point. The ECA focal point will also act as a Training Centre for national experts and will provide the necessary equipment (Hardware and Software to be secured from project funds) for training purpose.

- Establishment of subregional consultative committees on facilitation within each of the subregional groupings (Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) ...) and a Regional Consultative Committee. Such committees will meet at least once a year to discuss subregional arrangements and co-operation in facilitation. The regional Committee will concentrate on the harmonization, trade and transport facilitation systems and practices between subregions and carry out work on the establishment of a regional network of trade facilitation and regional transit system as part of the proposed African Economic Community.

ECE: Establishment of a regional focal point within the secretariat for co-ordination of existing facilitation bodies in the region and for assisting in the creation of such bodies in countries where they do not exist. In addition, the ECE regional focal point will be involved in the execution of objectives 2, 3, 5 and 7.

ECLAC: Focal-point staff will establish working relations with each facilitation body in the region; make available to them appropriate educational, organizational and procedural materials; and aid them in applying the general concepts of facilitation in their own national contexts. ECLAC's bimonthly bulletin Facilitation of Trade and Transportation Latin America and the Caribbean (FAL Bulletin) will serve as an additional liaison with the national committees, as well as a general vehicle for disseminating public information concerning facilitation.

ESCAP:

1. Assistance will be provided in setting up effective national trade facilitation bodies where they do not exist and strengthening the existing ones, and also on functioning of such bodies.

2. Help set up subregional trade facilitation network for the developing Pacific island countries, which ultimately will be part of overall ESCAP regional network.

ESCWA:

1. Establishment of a regional focal point within the secretariat consisting of one expert and one regional adviser with overall and specific responsibilities for implementing project activities;

2. Surveys or reports on existing trade facilitation mechanisms and institution building requirements: three case studies (Gulf Co-operation Council, Arab Co-operation Council, and other countries); regional/subregional mechanism and requirements;

3. Technical assistance missions arranged through the regional focal point and delivered through the regional adviser to assist national authorities and regional bodies in:

- analysis of the current situation in the field of trade formalities, procedures and documentation;
- formulation of proposals for improvement in current procedures and documentation;
- assistance in implementation of agreed facilitation measures;

4. In co-operation with ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO, one national workshop of two-weeks duration to train participants from national and regional/subregional entities on trade facilitation methods and techniques;

5. The regional focal point (expert and regional adviser) will identify issues requiring specialized technical advice in such fields as Customs, port practices, transport and transit procedures, commercial practices, legal matters, etc., and will arrange to draw from expertise assigned to UNCTAD/FALPRO for such purposes.

OBJECTIVE 5 - OPERATIONAL MECHANISMS - ESTABLISH REGIONAL MECHANISMS TO PROVIDE CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH NATIONAL, SUBREGIONAL AND REGIONAL FACILITATION BODIES CAN EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND CARRY OUT CO-OPERATIVE EFFORTS.

Outputs

(i) Regional meetings to establish the scope and framework of these mechanisms.

(ii) Formal agreements among participating Governments in each region to set up and support the mechanisms.

Specific regional activities

ECE: Upon request from the regional facilitation focal points, the ECE focal point will provide assistance which might be required by the other commissions in establishing the regional mechanisms, and will participate in the regional meetings or seminars, as appropriate.

ECLAC: It is anticipated that the mechanism will consist of an association of national facilitation committees, without a formal secretariat, patterned on one of the following models: (1) the Meeting of Ministers of Public Works and Transport of the Southern Cone Countries, in which secretariat functions are rotated yearly among the respective ministries of the seven member countries, or (2) the Meeting of National Customs Directors of Latin America, Spain and Portugal, in which the Mexican Customs Administration provides secretariat functions but the presidency rotates yearly to the country that will host the next annual assembly. Subregional and regional integration agencies such as the Andean Pact (JUNAC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) will be encouraged to participate actively in setting up this mechanism.

ESCWA: One regional seminar of one-week duration with national representation from both the public and private sectors and from regional and subregional entities concerned with or involved in trade facilitation, as outlined under Objective 3. The seminar should produce a formal agreement among participating Governments and bodies to support a regional mechanism which will provide a channel through which the national, regional and subregional facilitation bodies can exchange information and carry out co-operative efforts.

OBJECTIVE 6 - EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION - PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TRADE FACILITATION MEASURES AT NATIONAL, SUBREGIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL LEVELS.

Outputs

(i) Reports identifying national, subregional and regional facilitation needs.

(ii) Strategies and implementation programmes for the adoption of trade facilitation measures at national, subregional and regional levels.

(iii) Recommendations to national, subregional and regional facilitation bodies regarding the implementation of general trade facilitation measures.

(iv) Direct support to national, subregional and regional facilitation bodies, as required, for implementation of specific trade facilitation measures.

General regional activities

Technical co-operation missions by regional focal-point staff, with collaboration by UNCTAD/FALPRO experts as appropriate, aimed at assisting in:

- identifying facilitation needs and technical assistance requirements;
- preparing strategies and implementation programmes;
- implementing general facilitation measures.

Specific Regional Activities

ECA: To carry out appraisal of Transit Agreements and Transit Systems in ECOWAS, ECCAS and PTA and to organize in each of these communities one subregional seminar on applied trade facilitation in the light of subregional needs and programmes. These activities will be carried out in co-operation with ECE and UNCTAD/FALPRO

Interregional activities

Technical co-operation missions by experts in Customs, port practices, transport, commercial practices, legal matters, etc. from UNCTAD/FALPRO -- or, if appropriate, by drawing on expertise available in regional commissions or consultants from the region in question -- in consultation with regional focal-point staff and in compliance with regional strategies, in order to assist national, subregional and regional facilitation bodies in implementing agreed facilitation measures.

COMPONENT III - UN/EDIFACT PROMOTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

OBJECTIVE 7 - PROMOTE THE GENERALIZED USE OF UN/EDIFACT AND ASSIST IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

Outputs

Implementation of EDI in international trade and related services, using UN/EDIFACT standards.

Global activities to be undertaken by ECE

(i) Make the ECE's UN/EDIFACT data base, including the Trade Data Elements Directory (TDED) and the Trade Data Interchange Directory (TDID), available to the regional commissions. The ECE will acquire or develop and test such software as may be necessary, and prepare appropriate supporting documentation, so that the other regional commissions can download the data base, both initially and for updating. A mechanism will be included to indicate the status of items contained in an update (whether additions, deletions, or corrections to existing items) to facilitate their distribution by the regional commissions in developing areas to actual and potential UN/EDIFACT users.

(ii) Acquire or develop and test appropriate software for converting internal EDI files into UN/EDIFACT messages and vice versa.

(iii) Prepare UN/EDIFACT implementation manuals.

(iv) Develop a standard framework for the preparation of UN/EDIFACT pilot projects.

(v) Participate in regional, subregional or national seminars organized by the other commissions and in the installation of UN/EDIFACT in selected pilot sites.

General regional activities

(i) Process and disseminate information gathered at the regional level on telecommunications facilities and commercial network services, and develop appropriate procedures for making these services available to potential users.

(ii) In co-operation with ECE, organize regional, subregional or national seminars, workshops and training programmes. To the extent possible, transnational corporations that employ EDI in their operations will be asked to collaborate. The first regional seminar in each region should aim at introducing UN/EDIFACT and identifying potential trainees and pilot sites for possible subsequent installation.

(iii) In co-operation with ECE, install UN/EDIFACT in selected pilot sites in the public as well as the private sector. Working through national facilitation bodies, regional focal-point staff will make contact with candidate sites interested in using EDI, in order to aid them in applying UN/EDIFACT standards. In countries that are or have been participating in UNCTAD's ASYCUDA project for the computerization of national Customs procedures, the expertise developed by this project will also be tapped.

(iv) Promote the use of ASYCUDA as a tool for implementing UN/EDIFACT in Customs, transport and port operations in those countries that have not already installed ASYCUDA.

Specific regional activities

ECA: To carry out pilot projects in two countries or more in co-operation with telecommunications corporations that would provide public facilities (computer centres) to trading firms interested in EDI exchanges in UN/EDIFACT format to subsequently evaluate these pilot projects with a view to extending their experiences to other african countries.

ECLAC: Promote the appointment of a UN/EDIFACT Rapporteur for Latin America and the Caribbean, together with the appropriate advisory and support team. At this point, it is not clear that the incentive for applying EDI will have developed sufficiently in this region during the life of the project so that it will be feasible to appoint a rapporteur who would be in a position to participate beyond the life of the project in the work of WP.4 and its subsidiary Meeting of Experts on Data Elements and Automatic Data Interchange (GE.1). However, the possibility will be explored with the national facilitation bodies in an attempt to achieve consensus both on the desirability of such an appointment and on the most appropriate individual to carry out this function.

COMPONENT IV - REGIONAL PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL FACILITATION WORK

OBJECTIVE 8 - ENSURE PARTICIPATION BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEVELOPING REGIONS IN THE WORK OF THE ECE'S WORKING PARTY ON FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROCEDURES (WP.4).

Outputs

Increased awareness by Working Party members of the special problems and concerns of the developing regions.

General regional activities

(i) Prepare contributions (based on findings from meetings, studies and technical missions) to be submitted to the Working Party.

(ii) Bring representatives from national facilitation bodies in the developing regions to meetings of the Working Party and its subsidiary groups, and provide them with opportune briefings about the agenda of the sessions they will attend.

Specific regional activities

ECE: The focal point will organize, in co-operation with UNCTAD/FALPRO, briefing and debriefing sessions for experts participating in the sessions of the Working Party and its Meeting of Experts.

E. UNDP and other funding agencies inputs

The UNDP and other funding agencies are being requested to finance the following inputs:

1. Project personnel, together with their travel and per diem;

2. Short-term consultants, together with their travel and per diem;

3. Preparation, processing and distribution of training materials and videos;

4. Acquisition or development of software for downloading the UN/EDIFACT data base, and for converting internal EDI files into UN/EDIFACT messages and vice versa;

5. Travel and per diem for regional participation in the work of WP.4.

F. Risks

One significant risk would be an incomplete or delayed implementation by the developing countries of the recommended facilitation techniques and procedures. However, in view of the importance they attach to improving the

competitiveness of their foreign trade, it appears likely that few if any countries would ignore such recommendations. Failure of national facilitation bodies to make proper use of project outputs will constitute a more direct risk, which will be minimized through the continuing contacts with these bodies maintained by focal-point personnel in the regional commissions and by UNCTAD/FALPRO experts.

A calculated risk which must be accepted is that associated with UN/EDIFACT promotion and implementation in the developing regions. Training in this area given to staff of governmental offices in computer-related fields will create a real likelihood that the best qualified personnel will be induced to relocate in the private sector. To the extent that such movement is associated with greater incentives for this sector to apply EDI and UN/EDIFACT, however, it may in fact be considered a positive output of the project, rather than a failure.

III. Review and Reporting

At the end of each year, a report will be prepared summarizing the progress of the project to date. Representatives of the five regional commissions, UNCTAD and the UNDP will then meet to review the report and make such adjustments to the work programme as may be required.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

GENERAL

E/ECE/1217
19 March 1990

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-fifth session
(Provisional Agenda item 7(1))

CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT

(Commission decision M (44))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 11 of decision M (44).

2. In accordance with paragraph 3 of decision M (44) the Committee has effectively pursued its activities regarding the principal sectors indicated as priorities by the forty-eighth session of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/68, paras.235-237) confirmed by Commission decision C (42).

3. The Committee carried out the annual review of the status of application of international transport agreements of interest to ECE Governments in accordance with paragraph 8 of decision M (44). To date 37 of the 47 main Conventions and Agreements which have been elaborated under the auspices of the Committee are in force (see also document TRANS/R.295). The up-dating and/or revision of 12 of these international instruments has been actively pursued in 1989/1990 by the competent subsidiary bodies of the Committee (see Annex). The drafting of provisions on civil liability for damage caused during carriage of dangerous goods by road, rail and inland navigation vessels has been completed and a Convention was opened for signature on 1 February 1990; the elaboration of other instruments related to combined and container transport is progressing.

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4. The Committee has continued its efforts to improve inland transport in the ECE region. Its activities include:

(a) the continued development of European-wide road (AGR), railway (AGC) and combined transport networks;

(b) the study of problems caused by the transport of goods, especially dangerous goods;

(c) the study of problems connected with the construction and use of different means of transport, with special reference to the construction of motor vehicles and road traffic safety; with respect to road traffic safety, and as requested by the Inland Transport Committee, the attention of the Commission is drawn to the Committee's Resolution No.235 designating the week from 1 to 7 October 1990 as a Road Safety Week in the ECE region;

(d) the analysis of transport trends and in particular the international co-ordination of planning of cross-border transport infrastructures;

(e) the analysis of traffic flows along main corridors (Scandinavia and southern Europe; France and the Iberian peninsula/Maghreb; and Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM));

(f) the elaboration and approval of a study (white paper) on international rail transport in Europe (Resolution No.236 of the Inland Transport Committee);

(g) the activities related to the implementation of projects on the Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and the Trans-European North-South Railway (TER). (See also E/ECE/1201)

(h) the co-ordination and monitoring of studies on the harmonization of dimensions of loading units (Resolution No.237 of the Inland Transport Committee). (see also E/ECE/1215)

5. Furthermore, as agreed at the Committee's fiftieth session, preliminary action has been taken for the establishment and maintenance of an ECE Transport Data Bank and the first issue of an ECE Transport Bulletin containing economic and technical information in the transport area has been published.

6. In response to paragraph 10 of decision M (44), the Executive Secretary has taken the necessary administrative measures to provide adequate staffing resources and equipment for the highly-specialized and diverse activities for the harmonization of regulations on vehicle construction, as well as those on road safety and the carriage of dangerous goods.

7. The Executive Secretary participated in a meeting of all European Ministers of Transport in Budapest (Hungary) in September 1989, and in a special session of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport dedicated to transport and the environment in Paris (France) in November 1989.

ANNEX

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION

	Current status	Deadline for completion
Convention on Road Traffic (8 Nov. 1959)	Amendments proposed by Contracting Parties; preparatory work by Working Party on Road Traffic Safety	1990
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (8 Nov. 1968)	As above	1990
European Agreement Supplementing the Convention on Road Traffic (1968) (1 May 1971)	As above	1990
European Agreement Supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968) (1 May 1971) and an Additional Protocol on Road Markings (1 March 1973)	As above	1990
Agreement Concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts (20 March 1958)	Amendments to existing annexes (regulations); proposals for new annexes (regulations)	updated continuously
European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR) (15 Nov. 1975)	Amendments proposed by Contracting Parties; preparatory work by an *ad hoc* meeting	updated continuously
Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (4 June 1954)	Preparatory work by Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport	end 1990
Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (18 May 1956)	As above	end 1990

	Current status	Deadline for completion
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention) (14 November 1975)	Amendments proposed by Contracting Parties	updated continuously
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (21 Oct. 1982)	Preparatory work by Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport and Administrative Committee for the Convention	updated continuously
European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) (30 Sept. 1957)	Amendments proposed by Governments and Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	updated continuously
Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP) (1 Sept. 1970)	Amendments proposed by Contracting Parties	updated continuously